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CURRENT MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

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On July 1 the voters of Cleveland passed upon a new city charter presented for their consideration in accordance with the new "home-rule" constitutional arrangements. The charter introduces an innovation at the outset by providing for nomination by petition and election by the preferential system of voting. First, second, and other choices are allowed the voter. A majority is assured to elect by adding the second choices and, if necessary, the other choices, when no candidate has a majority of first-choice votes. The ballot is non-partisan and provision is made for rotation of the names upon it, so that each name in the largest list of candidates for any one office shall appear first on the ballot an equal number of times.

The council is given the character of a city legislative body. Its powers are extensive but confined to the legislative domain. It is composed of twenty-six members elected from the same number of wards now existing. The council elects its own president and clerk. All ordinances, save emergency measures, go into effect from and after forty days from the date of their passage. Emergency measures must be passed by a two-thirds vote and are defined as ordinances or resolutions "for the immediate preservation of the public peace, property, health, or safety, or providing for the usual daily operation of a municipal department in which the emergency is set forth and defined in the preamble thereto." The annual appropriation ordinance, passed by the council, is based upon detailed estimates submitted by the mayor, and careful consideration is assured by provisions for public hearings and publication in the *City Record*. Ample powers are conferred upon the council for the investigation of any city department or official and for the independent audit and examination of the city's accounts. Appeal may be had from the acts of the council by use of the referendum, demanded by ten per cent of the total number of electors who voted at the last preceding municipal election, and the initiative may be brought into play by a petition signed by at least 5,000 voters of the city. The

initiated measure must be submitted to the council, which may pass it as set forth in the petition or in a different form, or reject it entirely. The committee representing the petitioners may then require the measure to be submitted to the electors either in the original or in the amended form. A majority of the electors voting is sufficient to carry a proposed measure. Ordinances passed as emergency measures may be subjected to the referendum, but are deemed effective until rejected by the voters. Any elected officer of the city may be removed from his office by a successful recall election. The petition for such purpose must be signed by 15,000 electors, if the removal of an officer elected at large is sought, or 600 electors in the case of an officer elected from a ward.

The mayor is the only executive official elected by popular vote. The heads of the executive departments are appointed by him. He stands at the head of the administration and personifies the executive power of the city. He possesses the authority to institute investigations of all departments and officials, and together with the directors of the six departments has a seat in the council with the right to introduce measures and participate in discussion. The departments are those of law, public service, public welfare, public safety, finance, and public utilities. Of these, the creation of a department of public welfare seems most worthy of attention. Included in this department are divisions of health, charities and corrections, recreation, research and publicity, and employment. The elevation of all these functions into divisions of a major department of city government is indicative of the strong modern opinion in favor of the socialization of philanthropic and charitable effort, and constitutes one of the outstanding features of the new charter. The director of public utilities has under his direction only the non-tax-supported public-utility enterprises of the city. The head of each department is given authority to appoint an advisory board of laymen to act under his supervision. This provision calls to mind the *Deputationen* of the German municipalities whereby the best lay advice is made available for the service of the city. The mayor and heads of departments constitute a board of control of which the mayor is *ex-officio* the president. The meetings of this board are public, its votes are formal, and official records of its proceedings are kept.

The civil-service commission of three members is appointed by the mayor for a term of six years and the members may be removed by him for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office, but charges must be formally preferred and opportunity given the accused to be

heard in their own defence. The classified service consists of all officers elected by the people; all directors of departments; members of boards or commissions appointed by the mayor, and advisory boards appointed by heads of departments; secretaries to the mayor, heads of departments and boards or commissions; the clerk of the council; and such heads of divisions as the civil-service commission may determine.

As to franchises, the charter provides that in all ordinances for the granting or removal of franchises the city shall have the right to terminate the same and purchase all the property of the public utility. The city may also, alternatively, acquire the property of public-utility companies by condemnation proceedings. However acquired, the price paid by the city shall not include the value of franchises or renewals. In the case of extensions it is provided that the rights in them expire with the original grant or renewal. The final section ensures the control of the council over the distribution of space in, over, or under the streets and the right to require such charges in appliances and methods of operation as the public interest may demand. The sections dealing with improvements and assessments are too detailed to be set forth here. They accord with the best modern opinion upon that subject. Provision is made for preliminary investigation and for final adjustment by a board of revision of assessments which also reports to the council all claims for damages. The council then passes the final assessment ordinance. Interest on assessment bonds is counted as part of the cost of the improvement. No assessment may be made in excess of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of the actual value of the property after the improvement is made, and the city's share of the cost of an improvement may not be less than one-fiftieth of the total. The city in addition assumes the cost of intersections.

The Cleveland charter represents a careful study of the best features of modern municipal government. The charter commission built largely on experience and introduced innovations only where such innovations contributed to the greater simplification of the city government or its more direct responsibility to public opinion. The text has been issued in pamphlet form by the charter commission.¹

That an enormous disaster may yet have its good effects is again evidenced in the case of the flood at Dayton, O., where an almost complete regeneration in municipal affairs is being planned. The city has

¹ This note was supplied by Mr. F. W. Dickey, of Western Reserve University.

overwhelmingly voted in favor of the adoption of commission government and the form this is to take is a modification of the Des Moines idea with adaptations from the scheme of Staunton, Va., and Sumter, S. C. In brief, there are to be five commissioners, one of whom is to serve as mayor, with a general manager and city solicitor to be chosen by the commissioners. The general manager may be selected from the entire country. The city solicitor may at any time, under the direction of the general manager, investigate the affairs of any department of the municipal government. Civil-service appointment of municipal employees is to be assured. Not only is reform to be carried out as regards the personnel of city administration, but it is hoped that a new city hall and civic center may be erected. Already more than two millions of dollars have been raised by citizens for flood prevention. In connection with the general-manager plan, it might be noted that the municipality of River Forest, Ill., is now advertising for a general manager, and that this plan seems to be gaining in general favor.

In connection with the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University is to offer a course in the training of secretaries for commercial bodies during the coming academic year. The work is being undertaken at the suggestion of the National Association of Chambers of Commerce and in coöperation with the Boston Chamber. There will be a new special course on secretarial functions in addition to various general courses in business administration and public affairs. As part of this program of study, which will extend over two post-graduate years, a special course will be offered in the Department of Government on Municipal Budget-making and Accounting. A new course on Municipal Sanitation and Hygiene by Prof. G. C. Whipple is also announced at Harvard for next year.

The mayor of Cambridge, Mass., has appointed a charter commission to make a study and report concerning changes needed in the present charter of the city. The commission is composed of eleven members including Prof. W. B. Munro of Harvard University, Stoughton Bell, president of the Cambridge Taxpayers' Association, and W. G. Davis, president of the Board of Trade.

The city planning commission of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, has published a pamphlet presenting the views of Thomas H. Mawson of the University of Liverpool and of Henry Vivian, upon town planning and

housing. The pamphlet contains many suggestions as to these civic improvements.

New York City is to have a municipal reference library operated by the bureau of municipal investigation and statistics of the department of finance. Already the library has at its service the bureau's collection of books, reports and pamphlets, as well as the historical records of all the old villages and towns which have been consolidated into Greater New York. The reference library will be open for use by the public. Weekly lectures and discussions of vital topics in municipal government are being planned, and city officials and department employees will be asked to deliver these talks. In Dallas, Texas, a similar move is being made in the collection of material for use by city officials and the interested public in connection with the public library. In April the Chicago Public Library took over the control of the municipal reference library in the city hall of that city and will conduct it hereafter as a branch of the public library. This municipal reference library is engaged in collecting, indexing and preserving all data obtainable relative to the operation and government of municipalities, and the material is available to any citizen or body desiring information although it is intended primarily for the city officials.

This year's meetings of the National Municipal League are to be held in Toronto, Canada, during November.

The newly-formed state municipal league of Oregon is to have its headquarters in Eugene, and the University of Oregon will act as a bureau of research for the benefit of all members of the organization. Prof. F. G. Young has been authorized to appoint a commission of seven officials in Oregon towns to take the steps for complete organization.

The newly-formed International Municipal League, which was proposed at the last annual convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities, has drafted a constitution with a view to completing the preliminary organization. The constitution states the objects of the league as: (1) to facilitate the effective coöperation of its members in the investigation, study, and discussion of municipal problems; (2) to promote an international exchange of information and counsel in regard to plans proposed, methods adopted and results achieved in connection with the management and improvement of modern cities; (3) to secure

the most advantageous publication of such information as will be most useful to the members of the league and students of municipal affairs; and (4) to further international friendship, harmony, and progress. Membership in the league is open to all national, provincial and state organizations which are in sympathy with its objects and which are approved by its executive committee. The affairs of the League are to be administered by a council and the executive committee. This council is to be made up of one or not more than five delegates from each member of the league, but each member has one vote only. The council, in turn, appoints the executive committee of five persons in whose charge is the appointment and direction of officers and employees, the collection and disbursement of funds, the adoption of by-laws, and, in general, all work of the league. The executive committee, however, may not formulate or express the opinion of the league as an aggregation in regard to any municipal or political question nor may any member be subjected to dues or assessments or committed to any financial enterprise without the written consent of its delegates. Appointments of the executive committee may be cancelled and vacancies filled at any time by the council. The constitution further provides for amendments by a three-fourths vote of the council after notice to all members of the league.

As yet membership in the league is not as universal and international as might be desired, but it is expected that a good many organizations which now have the matter under favorable consideration will shortly vote their coöperation. The members thus far are as follows: National Municipal League of the United States; Union of Canadian Municipalities; Municipal Association of New Zealand; National Association of Local Government Officers, England (conditional); and Association of Municipal Corporations, England. The temporary secretary of the league is Hon. C. R. Woodruff, North American Building, Philadelphia.

A special *Report of Benevolent Institutions in the United States* is being prepared by the bureau of the census in connection with the thirteenth census. The preliminary figures state the total number of such institutions as 5,397. with 380,337 persons in their care. This shows an increase, over the last report (in 1904), of 1346 institutions and 95,975 inmates. The significant facts brought out by the report are the data in regard to the placing out of children in families and the increased interest manifested everywhere in the treatment of tuberculosis. This latter point accounts largely for the increase in the number of dispen-

saries and somewhat for it in the case of hospitals and sanitoriums. The net number of dispensaries added is 420, and nearly half of these were established in Pennsylvania by the state board of health for the care of tuberculosis. The six States having the largest number of benevolent institutions are New York with 797, Pennsylvania with 692, Massachusetts 359, Illinois 324, Ohio 311, and New Jersey 207. Of these States the greatest increase in number was shown in Pennsylvania (301) and the smallest in Ohio (52). Almost all States in the Union show an increase which indicates that provision is being made not only in the cities but in the rural districts for the care of those who need it.

The New Statesman is the title of a weekly publication recently undertaken in London by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. At present a series of articles is being printed in answer to the question "What is Socialism?" and the seventh paper has as its sub-title "The Expansion of Local Government."

The first application of the new law in California for the recall of the judiciary was made at a special election held in San Francisco on April 22, when a police judge was removed from office by a margin of 815 votes and his successor named. The total vote polled was less than two-thirds of the city's normal vote.

The mayor and some of the departmental heads of the city of Philadelphia, as well as representatives of the City Club, are to take a short course in municipal economics at the University of Wisconsin in the course of the summer. For this purpose a special short course of twenty-four lectures has been arranged to cover every phase of municipal conditions and government.

At a special election held in Tacoma, Wash., a proposal to expend \$87,000 in order to provide a municipal car-line was emphatically defeated together with a proposal for a municipal telephone system costing \$1,500,000. The defeat of these two proposed undertakings may find explanation in the fact that the municipal water and light plant in Tacoma is being operated at a loss.

The city of Chicago will this year receive, as its share in the net profits of the Chicago City Railway Company and the Chicago Railways Company, in the neighborhood of over two and one-half millions

of dollars. This will represent fifty-five per cent of the net earnings of these new companies after deducting costs of operation and including an allowance of five per cent on actual investment. It is expected that a dividend of seven per cent will then be paid to the stockholders. This is a noteworthy example of the granting of a franchise on terms of partnership in which the public receives a division of the profits in return for permitting the business to be carried on.

The official list of cities following the commission form of government and using the short ballot is published as corrected to April 1, 1913, in *The Short Ballot Bulletin* for April, 1913, and in the issue of *Equity Series* for April. The official number at that time is given as 246, and the total population of these cities is estimated at 5,484,706. Since that time commission government has been adopted in Portland, Ore.; Jersey City, N. J.; Lawrence, Kan.; and Columbus and Dayton, O., as well as in a number of smaller places. It was rejected by the voters of Charlotte, N. C., Marietta, O., Hoboken, Bayonne, Edgewater and New Brunswick, N. J., and others. Three Canadian cities have also adopted the plan, and Ottawa is to vote on the question next January.

The Los Angeles *Municipal News*, after thirty-two weeks of publication, has gone out of existence, the voters having by referendum decided against its further publication. The city auditor is conducting an investigation into the financial affairs of the *Municipal News* in order to explain the failure of the year's appropriation to cover more than eight months of expenses.

The recent Los Angeles election resulted in the choice of Judge Rose as mayor and the defeat of former City Attorney J. W. Schenk. The outcome has been commonly regarded as a setback for the more aggressive wing of the municipal reform element in southern California; but the situation on the eve of the election was complicated by so many different factors that no broad generalization is warranted. Mr. Schenk fought an uphill battle but would probably have been elected were it not for the antagonisms aroused by some of his chief supporters.

Following the example of the University of Cincinnati, the trustees of Buchtel College have offered formally their entire institution, grounds, buildings and endowments, amounting to about \$400,000, to the city of Akron, O., on condition that it be maintained as a municipal college. The college has trebled its attendance during the past years but

has not sufficiently increased its endowment. As a municipal institution the trustees point out that, with very slight addition to the money now spent for educational purposes by Akron, the college would offer to all qualified students of the city a college education with free tuition; that the college can be made of practical use in the work of the city government; and that it will furnish an excellent basis for a greater municipal university with technical and professional training for the youth of Akron. The college will be known as the College or University of the City of Akron, although if other schools or colleges are added the college of liberal arts is to keep its present name.

Among the recent publications in the field of municipal problems are the following: James Ford, *Coöperation in New England, Urban and Rural* (New York: Survey Associates, 1913. Pp. xxi, 237, \$1.50); W. F. Morse, *The Collection and Disposal of Municipal Waste* (New York: The Municipal Journal. \$5); S. H. Clay, *City Building* (Lexington: Commercial Club, 1913. Pp. 164. \$5); Women's Municipal League of Boston, *Handbook of Opportunities for Vocational Training in Boston*. Ed. by T. C. McCracken. (Boston: 1913. Pp. ix, 301. \$1.25); W. Jones, *National and Municipal Finance* (London: P. S. King, 1913. 1 s.); P. D. Leake, *The Use and Misuse of the Sinking Fund* (London: Gee and Company, 1912. Pp. 19); R. A. Glenn and A. D. Dean, *The Law and Practice of Town Planning* (London: Butterworth, 1913); Yves Guyot, *La gestion par l'État et les municipalités* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1913. Pp. viii, 437. 3.50 fr.); H. Biget, *Le logement de l'ouvrier: étude de la législation des habitations à bon marché en France et à l'étranger* (Paris: Jouve et Cie, 1913. Pp. 500. 5 fr.); G. Cahen, *Le logement dans les villes. La crise parisienne* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1913. Pp. 292. 5.50 fr.); Richard Passow, *Die gemischt privaten und öffentlichen Unternehmungen auf dem Gebiete der Elektrizitäts- und Gasversorgung und des Strassenbahnwesens* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1912. Pp. vi, 220. 6 M.); Sigmund Schott, *Die grossstädtischen Agglomerationen des Deutschen Reichs 1871-1910. Schriften des Verbandes deutscher Stadtestatistiker, 1.* (Breslau: Wilh. Gottl. Korn, 1912. Pp. iv, 130. 3.40 M.); G. H. Conert, *Die sächsischen Terraingesellschaften und ihr Einfluss auf die Stadterweiterung* (Leipzig: Duncker u. Humblot, 1913); *The City of London Year Book and Civic Directory* (London: W. H. and L. Collingridge. 5s.).

The Library of Congress has issued, in May, 1913, a new bibliography in its series. This is the *Select List of References on Commission Government for Cities*. Other pamphlets and reports recently published by various organizations dealing with municipal subjects are as follows: *Select List of References on the Valuation of Public Service Corporations*, compiled by Mary M. Rosemond, legislative reference assistant of the Iowa State Library; *Toronto Waterfront Development, 1912-1920* (with many illustrations), Published by the Toronto Harbor Commissioners; *Report to Committee of Audit*, February, 1913, by Peter White, on "The City of Bridgeport, Conn.: a Study of the Organization and Procedure of each Permanent Board, Commission, Committee and Office;" *Special Report of the Comptroller of St. Louis, transmitting the report of the Bureau for Revision of Accounts and Methods*, submitted on April 15, 1913, to the municipal assembly.

The Quarterly Journal of Economics for February, 1913, contained an article on "Frankfort-on-the-Main: a Study in Prussian Communal Finance," by Anna Youngman. In the February issue of the *Journal of Accountancy* appeared a paper on "Uniform Municipal Accounting for Second Class Cities," by J. G. Majilton, and in the same *Journal*, for March, was "Municipal Cemetery Accounts," by D. C. Eggleston. Two articles on the assessment of real estate, "The Experience of Cleveland and other Cities in the Use of Exact Methods in Assessment of Real Estate," by E. W. Doty, and The Proper Organization of the Assessing Department, together with an Account of Methods Applicable to the Assessment of Real Estate in Cities," by Lawson Purdy, were printed in the *Bulletin* of the Philadelphia City Club for March 4, 1913, *La Réforme Sociale* published, in its issue for February 16, an article entitled "Les services d'intérêt collectif et les régies municipales," by L. Dausset, and in the January issue, "La municipalisation des services publics en Italie," by L. Rizzi.

The May, 1913, issue of *The Newarker*, the organ of the Newark Free Public Library, contains carefully compiled tables and statistics (1) for the city of Newark in all its activities, conditions, and departments, and (2) for the twenty-five largest cities of the United States, exclusive of New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. This last table is divided into four parts. Part I deals with general statistics—population, and its increase during ten years, area, assessed valuation of property, tax rate, gross, net and per capita debt. Part II is concerned with schools.

In Part III figures are given for the amounts paid by the various cities for different services which the city provides, the mileage of streets and area of parks. Industrial statistics, figures for licenses, arrests for different causes, and the death rate make up Part IV. The data used in these tables were secured from the cities themselves and from various printed sources when not available directly from the city concerned.

During the present year seventeen bills have been introduced in the Massachusetts legislature to change the charter of the city of Boston, and all of these bills have been defeated. A determined opposition to any change in the present charter provisions has been made, not only by a great many public-spirited citizens, but by such organizations as the Boston Finance Commission, the Good Government Association, the city council, the Chamber of Commerce, the United Improvement Association, and others. The press of the city has been practically united in demanding that the charter be undisturbed for the present. For the first time in its whole municipal history the city has been allowed to pass through a three-year period without a single charter change.

According to a study made by the United States bureau of the census concerning the extent of civil service examination in cities of over 30,000 population, the smaller the city the less likely it is to have this mode of examining its candidates for employment as to their fitness for the work. The large cities, as a rule, have adopted comprehensive civil-service regulations. Of the 185 replies to the 193 inquiries sent out to cities, 76 cities report that they do not require any examination as prerequisite to appointment in city departments; 32 cities require examination for certain departments, but not for all; and 77 cities insist upon examination for appointment to all departments.

The efficiency division of the Chicago civil service commission has published a pamphlet containing an analysis of employment and charts showing departmental organizations and distribution of employees in the city of Chicago, and outlining the work done by the division during the years 1909-1912. To one studying the municipal administration of Chicago the large number of charts printed in this pamphlet furnish invaluable aid.

The Chicago City Club has organized a housing exhibition with the following sections: historical types of buildings in Chicago from 1830;

types of dwellings now being erected; "Darkest Chicago;" idealistic housing in Europe and America; competitive plans for typical quarter section.

The new home of the Boston City Club is now under construction. It will be the largest club house in New England. The club's present quarters will be taken over by the newly-organized Women's City Club.

The fortieth National Conference of Charities and Correction was held in Seattle during the week of July 5-12. Sessions were held on the following subjects: children, distribution and assimilation of immigrants, relation of commercial organizations to social welfare, families and neighborhoods, health and productive power, public supervision and administration, probation, prison and parole, the church and social work, and standards of living and labor. At the close of the First Town Planning and Municipal Organization Congress held at Ghent during the last week of July, there was an International Congress for the Fight against the Deterioration and the Adulteration of Foodstuffs.

On April 1 the newly-established municipal housing bureau of Berlin was formally put into operation. It aims to provide better dwellings for the working classes and is under the direction of a number of city officials. Various other bodies which are interested in housing will coöperate with the new bureau. Its running cost is estimated at \$25,000 per year.

The May issue of *Special Libraries*, the publication of the Special Libraries' Association, contains a complete bibliography on the subject of efficiency. Nearly twelve hundred titles are listed and classified. The work has been done under the direction of Mr. H. H. B. Meyer of the Library of Congress.

The governor of Pennsylvania has approved the Ambler metropolitan planning district bill permitting the suburbs of Philadelphia to unite in promoting plans for uniform and coöperative development. Under this act a district within a radius of twenty-five miles of Philadelphia is created into a metropolitan district for the purpose of planning highways, roads, parks, water supply, sewerage, sewage and garbage disposal, housing, sanitation, play-grounds, civic centers and other public improvements. The bill provides an executive department, under a

planning commission, appointed by the governor for a term of three years. The committee consists of fifteen members—twelve residents of the district and three residents of Philadelphia. The commission is to serve without compensation, and has authority to employ experts and engineers, the expenses to be paid by special assessments, levied by the commission against all the districts, not to exceed one-tenth of one mill in any year. Under the commission's jurisdiction plans, maps and diagrams are made for the district, as well as comprehensive plans for all kinds of improvements for the consideration of the district. The commission has no power to execute its plans; that is done by the local authorities, who may ask for suggestions in regard to any specific improvement.

The present activity of the American seaports, in extending and improving their dock facilities, and the large sums now being appropriated for this purpose, give added significance to the recent announcement that the Port of London Authority will spend over \$80,000,000 during the next four years in building new docks and in increasing the capacity of those already existing. Two new docks, the North Royal Albert and the South Royal Albert, are to be constructed, several of the older docks are to be deepened, and a new pumping station is to be installed. That this increase in docking facilities is needed may be seen from the fact that the 1912 report shows half a million net tons increase in foreign trade over the 1911 report. The work is in charge of the London Port Authority, created by act of parliament in 1908 to control all the harbors and docks of the port of London. This body has the right to issue bonds and stock, to build new docks, modernize the existing ones, and in general to handle the London dock problem in a large and thorough-going fashion. It is an appointed, not a selected, body.

The American City announces the formation of an "American City Bureau" for the purpose of promoting the "prosperity and general welfare of municipalities of all sizes, and the health, safety and comfort of their citizens." It plans to coöperate with individuals, private societies or public officials in solving any problems, as, for instance, conducting membership campaigns, raising funds for civic purposes or creating efficient organizations. It will also serve as a clearing-house for information concerning municipal improvements and community advance, furnishing information asked for, data for civic exhibits, lecturers and lantern slides for public meetings, and experts for the

studying and handling of various problems. The bureau will also sell books and pamphlets relating to municipal questions, and to this end has already issued a booklet containing a selected list of such books properly classified.

Among the articles appearing in *The American City* for May and June the following are of especial interest: "Bridges and Bridge Approaches," by Frank Koester; "Some Fundamentals of Housing Reform," by Dr. James Ford; "The Hydrolytic System of Sewage Tanks at Norwich, England," by Arthur E. Collins, city engineer of Norwich; "Some Impressions of City Planning in America," by E. G. Culpin, secretary of the English Garden Cities and Town Planning Association; "Municipal Highway Organization," by W. H. Connell, chief of the Philadelphia bureau of highways and street cleaning; "How the Parks and Boulevards of Kansas City are Financed," by G. E. Kessler; "The Organization and Functions of a city Planning Commission," by Hon. W. A. Magee, mayor of Pittsburgh; "Transportation and City Planning," by Milo R. Maltbie; "Municipal Market Buildings in the Philippines," by John R. Arnold of the executive bureau, Manila; "City Forestry Methods in a New England City," by W. W. Colton, city forester of Fitchburg, Mass.; and "How to Improve or Conserve your Public Water Supply," by George W. Fuller.

The port commissioners of Boston have brought to completion sufficient for present use by the Hamburg-American steamship line the Commonwealth pier, the longest passenger and freight pier in the country. This exceptionally long pier was undertaken and built at five months' notice in order to provide accommodation for the new line of transatlantic steamers docking in Boston. The work represents the culmination of long planning by the commercial interests of the city which had for many years desired a public pier at which the largest vessels could dock and which would be conveniently situated for transporting freight to the railroads and to the city by trucks. The federal government provided the channel, using for the work one of the largest dredges ever built. The city has constructed a bridge across an inlet and paved a street in order to provide access to the pier from the wholesale business district of Boston. The site selected was that of a former commonwealth pier which had been used mostly for railroad purposes and had lately been burned and fallen into disuse. The formal dedication of the present pier was held on May 30.

On May 15 a city market was opened in Des Moines in a new market house which had cost the city \$50,000. The building, while substantially constructed, has been widely criticised from an artistic point of view as well as from the fact that it consists of two stories instead of being built on one floor. The second floor contains a refrigerating plant. It is expected that the city will set the example in this municipal market by enforcing the new law, which took effect July 4, requiring all food displayed in grocery stores and markets to be protected from flies, dust and dirt.

Both St. Paul and Milwaukee are to follow the example of New York, Minneapolis and other cities, by selling municipal bonds in small amounts at department stores in the cities.

The plans for various undertakings managed under municipal ownership and operation do not show signs of growing fewer. During the present season municipal ice houses find considerable favor. Among other schemes which are being discussed widely are those for the municipal saloon, a municipal machine shop in Los Angeles, and a state-wide municipal theatre law in Iowa.

The Manchester (England) Municipal Tramways have allotted \$486,650 from the yearly profits for the relief of city taxes. This contribution is practically 5 per cent on the capital outlay of the undertaking.

The New York bureau of municipal research is publishing a series of five articles discussing "The Cost of Government in New York City," with a view to discovering the reason for the increase in the tax rate out of all proportion to the growth of population. The separate articles will later be issued as one pamphlet.

The Baldwin prize, which is offered by the National Municipal League for the best essay dealing with a municipal topic submitted by an undergraduate student in any American college or university giving instruction in municipal government, was this year divided into two prizes of fifty dollars each, one prize open to contestants from any of the above-mentioned institutions, and the other open to students in any of those institutions which had not previously won a Baldwin prize. The prize in the first class was won by Mr. E. A. Lawlor of Harvard University, and the other prize by Miss Sybel E. Loughead of Radcliffe College.

The subject for the competition in 1913 was "The Best Sources of City Revenue."

Figures supplied by the Pittsburgh Experiment station of the United States bureau of mines and by the *Iron Age* testify to the enormous waste in cities due to the smoke nuisance by causing the destruction of civic beauty, the depreciation and delapidation of bridges, viaducts, and buildings, etc. It is estimated that the annual loss through smoke is, in Cleveland, \$6,000,000, in Cincinnati \$8,000,000, in Pittsburgh \$10,000,000, and in Chicago \$17,000,000.

Seventeen years ago the London county council decided to compile a ground plan of London. The enterprise has just been completed at a cost of over \$100,000, and is for the use of municipal authorities and as a matter of record for the future. Its purpose is to provide a ground plan of London's 114 square miles in order to aid the council in ascertaining the ownership of property affected by street improvements and other schemes. Nearly 40,000 estates are represented. The difficulty of producing the map has been very great owing to the trouble of finding out definite particulars of ownership in many cases and owing also to the refusal of the land registry office to coöperate with the London county council. It might be mentioned also that the council periodically publishes a six-inch map of London for the purpose of showing the progress of building operations.